

Provost Employee Communication Council Minutes – May 14, 2003 Meeting

Present: Jo Ann Addison, Brian Bader, Annamarie Black, Alan Cohn (ex-officio), Susan Fogler, Linda Hunt, Chris Loss (ex-officio), Roger Morris, Diane Russell, Rob Schuett, Sarah Seat, Glenn Taylor, Anda Webb (ex-officio), Ann Zook

Council Chair Susan Fogler began the meeting by distributing a handout with information on the council election process and a timeline for the process in the upcoming elections. The discussion on election processes is a follow-up to a special council meeting recently held on council by-laws. Later in today's (May 14) meeting it was noted that the election timeline is compressed to ensure completion of the process in a timely manner and ultimately the election of new council members by the July 2003 council meeting. The process begins with finalization of ballots by May 25. Elections should be completed by June 9 so that new council members may be announced at the June 11 council meeting.

The council then discussed at some length details of the election process, as outlined on Ms. Fogler's handout. A roster of current council members listed by department/area was prepared on a whiteboard, and by agreement the council designated a "leader" and a "tallier" [sic] for each department/area that will be electing new members this year.

The leader and tallier responsibilities were discussed.

It was agreed that the leader will be the catalyst for getting the election process started and will contact five people within his department/area about serving on the council. It will be up to the discretion of the department/area and its leader to decide on a process for getting representatives to serve on the council. Three possibilities were mentioned: 1) volunteers, 2) elections, or 3) appointments by a department/area dean or chair. (Later discussion in today's meeting about these possibilities raised the issue of whether or not appointed representatives would best represent the interests of classified employee constituents. Also discussed were options for handling situations where not enough people volunteered/became candidates to give a department/area proportional representation on the council. Ultimately, the general consensus of the council was to leave such matters up to individual departments/areas.) The leader will maintain confidentiality during the election process.

The role of the tallier is to count accurately voting ballots, maintaining confidentiality. Election processes should be established so that completed ballots are sent to the tallier, freeing up the tallier from the task of collecting ballots. All ballots will be sent to the tallier.

Also covered in the discussion was the role of alternate council members. Alternates are especially important for a department/area, which has only one representative on the council. One option is to appoint an election runner-up candidate as alternate (a person who came in second in an election, for example). It was also agreed

that alternates should be encouraged to attend all council meetings, if possible, especially the July orientation meeting for new members, in order to familiarize themselves with council activities and processes and important issues under discussion.

Annamarie Black distributed to the council a handout with a sample memorandum from a department head (dean) to department/area-classified staff discussing the importance of the Provost Employee Communication Council and the nomination process for candidates to run for election on the council. The memo and its attached call for nominations (also in Ms. Black's handout) were successfully used in the 2002 elections. Included in the handout was an election ballot from a June 2002 campaign. One recommendation for the memo was the inclusion of the web address for the Provost Employee Communication Council website.

Ms. Fogler then discussed her recent appeal to council members for a write-up on "why I serve on the council" to be included on the council website. Not all members have responded. Susan wondered if there had been a communications breakdown and reminded members about the importance of such a write-up in allowing constituents to determine whom their representatives are and to have documentation which might serve as a platform for reelection campaigning.

Also related to council communication was the issue of getting information to constituents. It was generally agreed that email is an effective means of disseminating information, but not a perfect one since majordomo (mass email) lists can be hard to maintain and may quickly become out-of-date with staff turnover and changes. One council member discussed recent problems experienced with bounced mail in a mass email effort. On the other end of the communications spectrum, another council member noted that the election process in his area was advertised by word of mouth.

A parking lot issue that will be discussed at the July 9, 2003 meeting during the council orientation is the communication process of the council. The question raised is, are we as a council getting the information out to our constituents?

Ms. Fogler closed the meeting by noting that Ms. Black will chair the June 11 council meeting. She also hoped that Becca White, Director of Parking and Transportation, might be able to talk for 30 minutes at an upcoming council meeting on P&T affairs, a topic which interests many council representatives and their constituents.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Brian Bader